

Thank you to the Appropriations Committee for listening to and reading our concerns.

My name is Denise King and my husband, Frank, and I are the custodial grandparents of a young man with intellectual and developmental disabilities. His name is Matthew, he is 26, and he is a sweet and loving young man who enjoys living and working in the community with support from his wonderful private provider, Horizons, of South Windham, Connecticut. They have been his provider since Matthew came to live with us when he was 8, along with his sister and brother. He was on the Residential Waiting List for over 10 years but could never get any funding to live with peers in the community. Last year his provider decided, for several reasons, to place him in a group-home type situation near us, with just partial funding and the remainder out-of-pocket. He has been living with 2 other men in this home since last June. This situation has by large, been working well. There have been instances where we have had to step in to address some problem areas with staff and the other residents. Because he really has very little

funding, there is a fine line in what we feel we can say and address. If he cannot get the funding needed, and therefore put him on equal footing (for the care he needs) with others who have been placed, it gives him and us very little options for his care, especially after we are not able to check in on him, or are gone. Proper funding for private providers would help, as well, alleviate the staffing and placement problems that we are seeing all over the private sector. If private providers are compensated in a fair manner, they can continue to provide quality care for people in the ID Community. If funding comes through for people on the Residential Waiting List, our grandson needs to be included in that, even though he is placed, because as already stated, he does not have residential funding, which really leaves him in limbo moving forward.

We acknowledge and thank the Governor for hearing we advocates for people with ID/DD and including money in his budget for us. It needs to be noted, though, that as this is a beginning, there is not money for new grads (meaning people who have reached the age of 21 and therefore have no services on a daily basis and will need

to stay home), or the people in the BSP program who have behaviors that put themselves and caregivers at risk for injury.

We are asking the Appropriations Committee to ensure that the Governor's funding stays in the budget, but this certainly does not go far enough. Money for day services, BSP services, the Residential Wait List, and increased compensation for private providers is essential in providing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the services they need to live equally with their non-disabled peers in society.

Thank you.

Frank & Denise King, Lebanon, Ct.